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Occupational
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Coordinating
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MONTANA SOICC NEWSLETTER

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MICRO-OIS INSTALLATIONS

Thank you to all offices that participated in the Micro-Occupational Information System (Micro-OIS) training sessions! If you have questions or suggestions on how to make the system more understandable, let us know.

The Micro-OIS is designed to assist program planners in making decisions about establishing, terminating, or improving existing training programs. It contains the same data as the Montana Supply/Demand Report.

The Micro-OIS provides the capability to produce tailored reports through the use of search routines of the database files. Data is available for three major categories:

Occupational Demand -- Current and projected Montana occupational employment and average annual openings for Montana.

Occupational Supply -- The number of program completers by training program from Montana's training institutions.

Supplemental Analysis Data -- Data captured by the Job Service offices, which includes unemployment claimants, total applicants through Job Service, total openings through Job Service, and average hourly wage (wage information will be added in the next update cycle).

If you are interested in the Micro-OIS and have an IBM Personal Computer or IBM compatible, call the SOICC at 444-2741. The Micro-OIS is free to non-profit agencies.

THE NOICC/SOICC NETWORK

For most Americans, work--or the lack of it--matters. Their lifestyles as well as their livelihoods are influenced by their occupation and the employment and income opportunities it offers. Few decisions affect an individual's future more than choosing an occupation and the education and training needed to enter and succeed in it. To choose wisely, people need sound information about the world of work.

Preparing people for the work they seek serves both public and personal interests, if the preparation is solid and suited to labor market needs. Vocational education and training require substantial human and financial resources--resources too precious to

risk on programs that do not offer sound preparation for the future. In making judgments about which programs to offer and what the curriculum should include, educational planners and job training officials need relevant and timely occupational information.

Helping people make career-related decisions calls for special counseling and vocational guidance skills. Counselors working in schools, job training programs, state and local employment services, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and other settings are in a position to assist people at various stages of career exploration or decision making. To help their clients make better-informed choices, they also need comprehensive occupational information.

To attract new industries or anticipate shifts in the labor market, state and local planners need data on current and projected employment, the supply of skilled workers, and sources of training available in their state or local area. Increasingly, occupational information is being used to support economic development initiatives and human resources planning in both the public and private sector.

Sensible decisions, whether they affect one life or many, often depend on ready access to relevant and timely information about the labor market. Helping people get the occupational information they need is what the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) and its network of state offices (SOICCs) are about.

The involvement of many institutions and individuals has benefited both users and producers of occupational information. New statutory members have been added to NOICC and SOICCs. NOICC plans to work with these agencies to learn more about their needs for occupational information and to explore how existing systems and resources can be enhanced or adapted to serve them.

A majority of states are developing or operating computer-based occupational information systems. NOICC plans to examine these systems, with an emphasis on the Micro-OIS. The purpose will be to identify new directions and initiatives that will make the systems more useful to planners and administrators of vocational education and employment-related training programs, as well as other potential users.

NOICC and the National Crosswalk Service Center are working on the addition of two new modules in the Micro-OIS. One enhancement is an institutional training module that would allow planners to identify state and local institutions that could offer training in particular occupations. The other is an industry/employer module that would allow planners to identify potential sources of employment for program completers.

Among other activities to promote awareness and use of occupational information, NOICC is planning a series of seminars to acquaint counselor educators with the textbook developed for the Improve Career Decision Making (ICDM) workshops.

In less than a decade, the NOICC/SOICC Network has become an effective instrument for bringing data users and producers together on common ground. It has enabled them to work together on developing information systems that can respond to changing needs among users and producers of occupational information. In a period of diminishing resources, continued cooperation and commitment among data producers and users will be essential in maintaining these systems and meeting the need for timely and accurate information about the world of work.

POPULATION TRENDS

Montana's population increased by five percent in the period 1980 through 1985, according to a report issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. The results were part of an overall picture that showed the western region of the United States leading all geographic areas with a 10.8 percent growth rate. The national average for the period increased by 5.4 percent.

Montana's population increase is mainly attributed to births balanced against a net migration factor of zero. That is, about the same number of people left the state as moved here between 1980 and 1985, while the birthrate accounted for the 40,000 person increase.

ESTIMATES OF THE RESIDENT POPULATION OF STATES, JULY 1, 1984 AND 1985

(Numbers in thousands. Includes armed
forces residing in each state.)

Region, Division, and State	7/1/85 (provisional)	7/1/84	4/1/80 (census)	Change Number
UNITED STATES	238,740	236,495	226,546	12,194
Northeast	49,859	49,728	49,135	724
New England	12,660	12,578	12,348	311
Middle Atlantic	37,199	37,150	36,787	412
Midwest	59,197	59,078	58,866	331
East North Central	41,642	41,574	41,682	-40
West North Central	17,555	17,504	17,183	371
South	81,858	80,765	75,372	6,485
South Atlantic	40,227	39,533	36,959	3,268
East South Central	15,122	15,033	14,666	455
West South Central	26,510	26,199	23,747	2,763
West	47,826	46,924	43,172	4,654
Mountain	12,789	12,563	11,373	1,416
Pacific	35,037	34,361	31,800	3,237
Mountain States:				
Montana	826	823	787	40
Idaho	1,005	999	944	61
Wyoming	509	513	470	40
Colorado	3,231	3,190	2,890	341
New Mexico	1,450	1,426	1,303	147
Arizona	3,187	3,072	2,718	469
Utah	1,645	1,623	1,461	184
Nevada	936	917	800	135

Note: Some figures may not balance because of rounding to the nearest thousand.

SOURCE: Inside, Volume 1 Number 2, Montana Department of Commerce

HOW EMPLOYERS MAKE HIRING DECISIONS

The following findings are based on research that was conducted at the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, and sponsored by the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Education.

The researchers in this study described and analyzed the behavior of employers in their assessment of youthful job applicants for entry-level clerical, retail, and machine trades jobs. The results can be used by youth as they make choices about their use of time and resources for developing employability skills.

Generally, employers have each job applicant fill out an application form, which is screened to obtain a set of information. The employers were shown an entry-level job description and application forms from fictitious youthful job seekers. The applications exhibited a wide range of educational and work experience backgrounds. Employers rated the individual applicants with a hiring priority rating.

How are employability ratings determined? Three general factors influence how employers rate youthful job applicants. They are characteristics of the applicants, characteristics of the job and firm, and characteristics of the rater. The questions and answers below summarize the results from analyzing the influence of the first of these factors, applicant characteristics.

How important to employers are high school grades?

High school grade point average had the strongest positive influence of any school experience variable for all three occupations.

Does the course of study or major in high school influence employability ratings?

In machine trades occupations, a machine trades vocational education program had a significant positive influence on ratings. In clerical and retail occupations, the high school curriculum did not influence ratings.

Does participation in a cooperative education program or an occupational work experience program increase the employability ratings?

Cooperative distributive education program participation had a significant positive influence for retail applicants. Other cooperative or occupational work experience program participation had a positive, but not statistically significant influence on ratings.

Does attending a postsecondary institution improve employability?

Attending a postsecondary school improved ratings in all occupations. The positive effect was virtually doubled if the applicant had obtained a certificate or degree.

How important is postsecondary grade point average?

Postsecondary grade point average was statistically insignificant for all occupations. The important postsecondary school characteristics were that applicants completed programs and that the programs were relevant to the jobs being sought.

What are the effects on employability ratings if an applicant has no work experience?

Having no prior work experience was a serious disadvantage to an applicant. Employers usually coach applicants to list activities such as babysitting, yard work, or volunteer work to indicate the ability to accept responsibility.

What kinds of part-time jobs improve employability ratings?

Employers favored employees who held part-time jobs at large organizations and had work experience relevant to the job for which they are applying. Experience in fast-food restaurants was valued highly by retail employers.

How does part-time work experience during school influence employers?

There was virtually no difference in employability ratings for applicants who had part-time work experience during the school year and those who worked during the summer only. If working during the school year has a negative influence on grades, it is ill-advised.

Do employers pay attention to reasons applicants list for leaving prior jobs?

The number of quits and number of times laid off had a strong negative influence on the employability rating.

Do gaps in the work experience record hurt employability ratings?

Gaps in work experience did not hurt employability ratings for the entry-level jobs sampled.

This is a review of the research document entitled "The Influence of Applicants' Education and Skills on Employability Assessments by Employers" by Kevin Hollenbeck and Bruce Smith. The full report of this study is available by contacting Margo Vreeburg Izzo of the National Center Research Division at 800-848-4815 (toll free).

NEW D.O.T. SUPPLEMENT

The U.S. Department of Labor has announced plans for the release of the Second Supplement to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, Fourth Edition. It will contain 854 definitions, including 276 from the first supplement (published in 1982). The supplement will present information collected during the past two years and will feature occupations in microelectronics and robotics. In addition to the DOT definitions and codes, the supplement will include Guide for Occupational Exploration (GOE) codes and the new physical demand and environmental conditions ratings. The release date and price information have not been announced, but the supplement will eventually be available from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402-9325.



CHANGING WORK SCHEDULES

Your grandparents probably worked six days a week, 10 hours a day. Your parents began with the 40 hours, five day week. Neither had much flexibility concerning work schedules; they were fixed by their employer for everyone.

Today, along with an interesting display of new occupations, a variety of work schedules are available. Not all employers offer all, or any of them. Many new employees will have to start on traditional work cycles. But, the options exist and more experienced employees are electing them.

FLEXTIME...

Employees select the hours of the day they most like to work, such as from 6 am to 3 pm or 10 am to 7 pm. Many organizations have a core period, such as from 10 am to 3 pm when all employees must be on the job. Two-job families find flextime schedules a help in providing coverage for children at home.

COMPRESSED WORKWEEK...

This permits reorganizing the work week to eliminate a day or part of a day on a regular basis. This may be arranged by an individual or used by an entire organization.

SHARED JOBS...

Two or more people perform duties usually held by one person, usually two people working a half-day each.

PART-TIME WORK...

These are often permanent positions requiring less than the normal work hours per week. Working parents, youth, and older persons often prefer part-time jobs.

TEMPORARY WORK...

More organizations are hiring temporary employees, who work full or part-time during peak periods. This avoids the need to carry extra employees during normal or slow times of the year.

HOME-BASED WORK...

Futurists say that many/most of tomorrow's jobs may be done at home. Many jobs today lend themselves to home settings such as telephone sales, writing and editing, consulting, and computer work.

LEISURE SHARING...

This is like part-time work, but in this case the employee negotiates a reduced work week to permit more time for personal and recreational needs.

TAPERED EMPLOYMENT...

This is often used by employees preparing for retirement who work less each year to help adjust the mix between working hours and leisure time.

SOURCE: New Mexico SOICC News



*I like the dreams of the
future better than
the history of the past.*

—Thomas Jefferson

ADULT EDUCATION PARTICIPATION

Over 23 million people participated in more than 43 million adult education courses during the year ending May 1984, according to the Center for Statistics (CS), U.S. Department of Education.

Adult education is defined as any course or educational activity taken part-time and reported as adult education by respondents 17 years old and over.

During the 1983-84 school year almost 14 percent of the nation's adult population participated in adult education. Over 55 percent were women. About half the participants were under 35 years old, with the largest concentration in the 25- to 34-year-old range.

Over 80 percent of all participants were employed; 4 percent were unemployed, looking for work. Professional workers, administrative support (including clerical), and executives, administrators, and managers composed over half of the employed participants.

The most popular courses were business courses, followed by engineering, and health care. These three fields accounted for about half of all courses taken.

Almost two-thirds of adult education courses were taken for job-related reasons, such as career advancement.

SOURCE: BULLETIN, Office of Educational Research & Employment, U.S. Department of Education

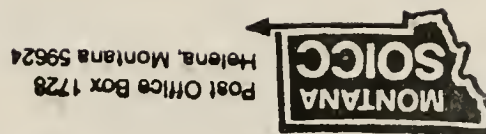
Seasons
Greetings

*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year
to all our readers
from the SOICC Staff.*

Kate Kahle, Editor
Montana SOICC Newsletter
Volume Four - Number Three

Robert N. Arnold, Program Manager
Montana SOICC

(6610)



If you would like to contribute to this newsletter, contact the Montana SOICC at P.O. Box 1728, Helena, Montana 59624. The Montana SOICC reserves the right to edit all information submitted.

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